

## THE BUDAPEST GRAND HOTEL

By Lorraine Viade, Psy.D.



Check into this grand edifice for a rollicking little adventure, filled with charming and calculating characters that cause chaos and comedy. *The Budapest Grand Hotel* is one of those places where you just look at it and think, “If those walls could talk”. Well, in this case, those walls shout out outrageously. Ralph Fiennes is magnificent in the role of an old-fashioned concierge who brings joy to his patrons. Fiennes delivers the goods in many ways here, showing off a comedic sensibility that I really enjoyed. There is a cast of cameos that surprise and amuse in every scene. The narration adds to the fun. And if you like quirky, off-beat stories, this is a must-see. The humor is dry, the wit biting and eccentricities abound here. The political satire is timelessly relevant.

This is a story about an era; a way of life where people of wealth and luxury lived lonely lives in residential palaces, relying on those paid to be of service. It is also about bizarre friendships that are created in life and the ironic twists of fate that leave one in some extraordinary circumstances. This is more a character study set inside a stereotypes-gone-wild romp that is somewhere between the Cohen Brothers and *Moonrise Kingdom*. There is a stylistic familiarity here, and with the well-known actors hamming it up to the shin bone, just sit back relax and enjoy your stay.

To reveal the plot would tell too much and perhaps spoil the laughs so I won't do that. There is something of the master teaching his apprentice here, and how close those relationships can be when there is sincere affection between teacher and pupil. There is a lot of chemistry between these oddballs. Watching them occupy different places in time over the course of the history of this grand place was a treat like the chocolate on the hotel pillow. Like the old-fashioned Agatha Christie movies where all the players just seemed to be having a great time, *The Budapest Grand Hotel* is a great place to sit quietly and people watch. The acting is superb. Wes Anderson really knows how to make the ridiculous sublime.

In this case, be the great detective and you just might discover what treasures are in store for you in the lobby and behind all of those closed doors. Even the credits are amusing.

I give *The Budapest Grand Hotel* four hotels.

